

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 215949 TOSEC 250006

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 5990 ACTION SECSTATE 31 AUG 1974.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 5990

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR TOON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IS EG JO LE SY

SUBJ: ALLON'S VIEWS ON THE CABINET DISCUSSION OF SINAI II AND
CURRENT PALESTINIAN DEVELOPMENTS

1. ON AUGUST 30, ALLON REVIEWED FOR ME THE CABINET DISCUSSION OF
THE PREVIOUS DAY ON SINAI II. HE CHARACTERIZED THE LONG DEBATE
AS INTERESTING, CALM AND HELPFUL. THE FOREIGN MINISTER LED OFF
THE DISCUSSION WITH A REVIEW OF THE EXPECTATIONS AND RESULTS
OF THE AGREEMENT AND CONCLUDED THAT, NOTWITHSTANDING THE
VIOLATIONS ON THE GROUND AND THE FACT THAT EGYPT HAS NOT FULLY
LIVED UP TO ALL ITS COMMITMENTS, THE AGREEMENT WAS ON BALANCE A
GOOD ONE. HE MADE TWO PARTICULAR REFERENCES TO THE U.S. IN HIS
PRESENTATION: FIRST, EXPERIENCE UNDER THE AGREEMENT SHOWED THE
NEED FOR SOME MECHANISM OR SOME PARTY--IN THIS INSTANCE, THE
U.S.--TO CHECK ON AND MEDIATE DISAGREEMENTS REGARDING ALLEGED
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VIOLATIONS AND SUCH A MECHANISM SHOULD BE A PART OF ANY

FUTURE AGREEMENT. SECOND, THE ONLY CRITICISM WHICH CAN BE MADE OF THE U.S. SINCE THE AGREEMENT WAS ITS FAILURE TO VETO THE NOVEMBER 1975 SC RESOLUTION ON THE PLO. (I SAID, AS ALLON KNEW FROM OUR PAST EXCHANGES, WE DISAGREE ON THIS QUESTION AND I SAW NO NEED TO REVIVE THE ISSUE.) THE WEAKEST POINT OF THE AGREEMENT WAS THE COMMITMENT ISRAEL FELT IT HAD OBTAINED THAT EGYPT WOULD REDUCE ITS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL WARFARE; THE ISRAELI PUBLIC IS VERY SENSITIVE TO THIS AND TO WHAT IT CONSIDERS VIOLATIONS OF THE SPIRIT OF THIS COMMITMENT--A RECENT EXAMPLE OF EGYPTIAN PERFDY OCCURRED WHEN THE SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION TO HAVE NORMAL RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR SAW HIM THE NEXT MORNING TO COMPLAIN.

2. ALLON WAS FOLLOWED IN THE DISCUSSION BY CHIEF OF STAFF GUR WHO GAVE A VERY PERCEPTIVE AND ANALYTICAL REVIEW OF THE MILITARY ASPECTS OF THE AGREEMENT. ALLON SAID IT "SHATTERED CRITICISMS OF THE GOVERNMENT BY CERTAIN FORMER GENERALS" AND EVEN MINISTERS WHO HAD HAD MISGIVING ABOUT THE MILITARY EFFECTS OF THE AGREEMENT WERE CONVINCED BY GUR THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD MADE THE RIGHT DECISION.

3. ALLON SAID IT IS HIS JUDGEMENT THAT THE OPPOSITION WILL NOT RAISE THE SUBJECT IN A FORMAL KNESSET DEBATE BECAUSE IT KNOWS THE GOVERNMENT WOULD REPLY WITH FACTS AND FIGURES AND THE OPPOSITION WOULD LOSE. IT IS CLEAR TO ALLON THAT THE OPPOSITION ALSO SEES VERY LITTLE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR ANY CRITICISM OF THE AGREEMENT.

4. (IN A SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION WITH LABOR SECRETARY USERY PRESENT, ALLON CITED ANOTHER SPECIFIC ADVANTAGE OF SINAI II. HE SAID THAT BEFORE THE AGREEMENT THE AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON ACTIVE DUTY BY AN ISRAELI RESERVIST WAS ABOUT 70 DAYS ANNUALLY; NOW THAT AVERAGE IS ABOUT 40 DAYS. IN ADDITION, THE RESERVE DUTY IS SPENT IN MEANINGFUL FIELD TRAINING AND NOT IN LESS PRODUCTIVE GARRISON DUTY IN THE WESTERN SINAI.)

5. IN THE ENSUING CABINET DEBATE OF THE AGREEMENT AND ITS EFFECT ON THE PLO, ALLON SAID HEMADE THE POINT THAT IT WOULD BE A DELUSION TO THINK THAT THE PLO HAD BEEN DESTROYED IN LEBANON. NEVERTHELESS, IT HAS LOST COMPETENCE AND PRESTIGE IN THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ARAB WORLD AND EXPECIALLY IN THE WEST BANK. THE NEW MAYORS IN THE WEST BANK ARE AGAIN LOOKING TO AMMAN, THEY RECOGNIZE THEY NEED ASSISTANCE FROM JORDAN AND NOT THE PLO, AND KING HUSSEIN HAS RESPONDED ADEPTLY TO THIS NEW MOOD ON THE WEST BANK.

6. ALLON THEN WENT ON TO DEVELOP FOR ME HIS PERSONAL VIEW OF CURRENT TRENDS AMONG THE PALESTINIANS AND WHERE THEY MAY LEAD. HE SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THE PRESENT CLOSE TIES BETWEEN DAMASCUS

AND AMMAN, WHICH HAD THEIR ORIGIN IN SYRIA'S NEED FOR JOREANIAN SUPPORT IN THE ARAB WORLD, WILL BE EXPLOITED BY THE SYRIANS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO BUILD BRIDGES BETWEEN THE JORDANIANS AND PALESTINAIN CIRCLES WHICH ARE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD SYRIA. DAMASCUS WILL ALSO DO WHAT IT CAN TO PROMOTE THE TREND TOWARD RECONCILIATION BETWEEN WEST BANK FIGURES AND AMMAN. THE PURPOSE OF THESE MOVES WOULD BE TO FIX ON A FORMULATION WHICH WILL INCLUDE JORDAN IN ANY FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH WILL "LEGITIMATE SOME RETURN OF JORDAN".

7. I ASKED ALLON IF HE FELT JORDAN COULD RESUME AN ACTIVE NEGOTIATING ROLE WITHOUT A REVERSAL OF RABAT. FOREIGN MINISTER ADMITTED HE WAS NOT SURE ABOUT HOW RABAT COULD BE REVERSED--WHETHER BY MAJORITY VOTE OR A UNANIMOUS DECISION. IF IT WERE A MAJORITY VOTE, THE SUPPORT OF THE SAUDIS--WHICH HE WOULD EXPECT--WOULD BE A HELPFUL FACTOR. IN ANY CASE, IF THE SYRIANS WERE SUCCESSFUL IN THEIR MANEUVERS TO THE EXTENT THAT THE PALESTINIANS THEMSELVES REQUESTED A JORDANIAN ROLE, OTHER ARABS WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO OPPOSE.

8. ALLON CONCLUDED HIS REVIEW BY RESTATING A VIEW WHICH HAS BECOME ALMOST RITUAL IN OUR RECENT CONVERSATIONS--THAT THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE OUTCOME TO THE LEBANESE CRISIS IS PARTITION. IT MAY BE A FEDERATION, IT MAY BE A CONFEDERATION, IT MAY BE SOME FORM OF CANTONIZATIN, BUT AFTER ALL THE BLOODSHED WHICH HAS OCCURRED, THE PARTIES WILL THEMSELVES BE SATISFIED WITH NOTHING LESS THAN SOME FORM OF AUTONOMY. PARTITION ALREADY EXISTS DE FACTO AND NOTHING CAN RESTORE THE STATUS QUO ANTE. HE SAID THE SHI'ITES ARE BECOMING MORE INTERESTED IN A FINAL ARRANGMENT WHICH WILL MAKE FORMAL THIS PARTITION, WHICH THE SYRIANS AND MARONITES ALREADY SUPPORT. I TOLD ALLON AGAIN FOR THE NTH TIME THAT WE OPPOSE PARTITION DE FACTO OR DE JURE, AND WE STAND FOR THE CONTINUING INTEGRITY OF LEBANON. ALLON SAID HE WISHED ME TO CONFIDENTIAL

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UNDERSTAND THAT THESE ARE HIS PERSONAL VIEWS AND THE GOI HAS NO AGREED POLICY REGARDING THE FUTURE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF LEBANON.

9. COMMENT: YOU WILL RECOGNIZE THE ABOVE AS VINTAGE ALLON AND MOST OF WHAT HE SAID MAY CAUSE YOU TO REGURGITATE. BUT BE GENTLE WITH YOUR OLD FRIEND. HE , AFTER ALL, A DECENT HUMAN BEING IN A SOCIETY OF SOBS. TOON UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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